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FARM LABOR PLANS FOR FALL

A transcribed talk by M. L. Wilson, Director of the Cooperative Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Recorded: August 14, 1945. Time: 5 minutes, 18 seconds, not including announcer's introduction.

ANNOUNCER'S OPENING AND CLOSING

Opening

ANNOUNCER: (LIVE)

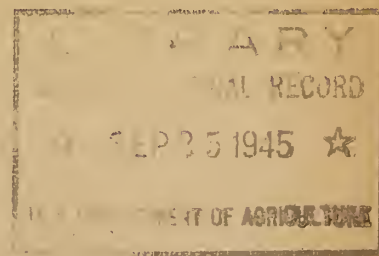
One thing Victory won't change is the farm labor situation for the next three months. Farmers have produced the third largest crop in history. They've achieved this record production in the face of the toughest farm labor situation of any year of the war. Farmers will still face critical situations for many weeks . . . if they're to save all their crops. In October. we'll reach the peak need of the entire year for extra farm workers. Now, by transcription from Washington, let's hear what the plans and prospects are for finding and placing enough workers to harvest fall crops without loss. Mr. M. L. Wilson, Director of the Cooperative Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, will give you this story.

Closing

ANNOUNCER: (LIVE)

And that is what M. L. Wilson, Extension Service Director of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, has to say about the needs and prospects for extra help on farms this fall.

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TRANSCRIPTION:

WILSON

Industrial cutbacks are not likely to change the farm labor situation much in the next 90 days. Nor will enough men be released from military duty to change the picture. Three million extra workers will still be needed to get in the 1945 crop. We will have to harvest our crops as planned . . . with the help of men, women, boys, and girls, and prisoners of war and foreign workers.

Now, let's see why we need so many extra farm workers in the fall. Let's run quickly over the list of big harvest jobs that are still ahead.

Through September there are fruits and vegetables to pick, potatoes and corn to harvest, and silage to get in. In the South, cotton picking starts. Peanuts and rice are ready. The Middle West has sugar beets, potatoes and tomatoes. Grain harvest is going on in northern Montana and North Dakota. Maine, Idaho and Colorado are harvesting potatoes. In the Pacific Northwest, they're picking fruit and hops. California has sugar beets, tomatoes, fruit, and nuts.

All through October and into November, farmers will still be getting in late crops. In Florida, the harvest will be starting all over again with the new citrus crop.

Now, what is being done to help farmers find the extra hands they need for all this work . . . that is, farmers who can't find the workers they need themselves.

The Department of Agriculture is still concentrating all its wartime machinery on this problem. Plans in the making for the past several months are now being put into action to keep from wasting any food in a world that needs every bite it can get this winter.

All over the country, local calls for extra farm workers are going to townspeople. Meetings have been held with school officials to explain the fall needs for farm workers. These officials will cooperate by adjusting classroom schedules to allow boys and girls extra time for farm work. Men and women will give all the spare time they can. Transportation difficulties are making it more necessary than ever for farmers to use as much local help as possible.

Where local help cannot handle a farm job alone, the Department of Agriculture looks elsewhere for workers. This means finding them wherever available, and getting them moved to the areas of need.

Altogether, there'll be about 240,000 workers from such sources this fall. A small army made up of native farm workers not needed in their home areas, migrants, prisoners of war, and foreign workers.

There are now 20,000 workers in what we call the Atlantic Coast Migratory movement . . . working up and down the Atlantic Seaboard. These people move from one job to another with the seasons. The Extension Service helps them to cut down time spent on the road by keeping them informed on crop situations and labor needs and helps them get gas and tires. In this way, they waste little time looking for the next job, and increase their annual earnings.

Over 6,000 workers from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and eight other southern States have been recruited by State Extension services and moved west and north to critical grain areas. About 20,000 Latin Americans from Texas will work on sugar beets in the Rocky Mountain and Lake States. Around 27,000 Jamaicans and Bahamians will do farm work -- mostly east of the Mississippi. Around 63,000 Mexican Nationals will work on the West Coast and in the Southwest. Better than 1,000 workers from Newfoundland are helping northeast dairymen. The Army is providing about 100,000 prisoners of war.

One of the biggest jobs prisoners of war and foreign workers will do is to harvest sugar beets . . . about 780,000 acres.

The potato crop is big this year . . . over 408,000,000 bushels. Plans have been made to use all available local help before bringing in outside workers. In Maine, the State extension service has recruited 1,500 workers in Kentucky to use in the potato harvest . . . from the middle of September to the end of October. Large numbers of extra workers will be needed in the fruit harvest in Washington State, California, and Oregon.

I've given you a quick picture of farm labor needs for this fall . . . and the plans to meet the Nation's needs. But it's enough to give you an idea of the groundwork planning that has been going on for months . . . and to assure you no change has been made in these plans, even though the war is over. If you need extra help for your fall crops . . . if you haven't already done so, get your order in to your county agricultural agent or his farm labor office at once. Teamwork took us over the summer farm labor hurdle. Teamwork will take us over the fall hurdle.

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